



City of Hampton, VA

Meeting Minutes

City Council

22 Lincoln Street
Hampton, VA 23669
www.hampton.gov

W. H. "Billy" Hobbs, Jr.
Will Moffett
Chris Snead

Christopher G. Stuart
Donnie R. Tuck
George E. Wallace

Molly Joseph Ward, Mayor

Staff:

Mary Bunting, City Manager
Cynthia Hudson, City Attorney
Katherine K. Glass, CMC, Clerk of Council

Wednesday, June 12, 2013

9:36 AM

Fort Monroe

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

MOLLY JOSEPH WARD PRESIDED

PRESENT:: W. H. "Billy" Hobbs, Jr., Will Moffett, Chris Snead, Christopher G. Stuart, Donnie R. Tuck, George E. Wallace

The meeting convened at 9:36 a.m. with all members of City Council present.

The following staff members were present: City Manager Mary Bunting, City Attorney Cynthia Hudson, Clerk of Council Katherine Glass, Assistant City Manager James A. "Pete" Peterson, Assistant City Manager James Gray, Communications Strategist Robin McCormick, Parks and Recreation Director James Wilson, Community Development Director Terry P. O'Neill, Public Works Director Anthony Reyes, and Planning and Zoning Administration Manager Keith Cannady.

The tour narration was given by Glenn Oder, Executive Director of the Fort Monroe Authority (FMA); Kirsten Talken-Spaulling, Superintendent, National Park Service (NPS); Jeff Pasquino, U.S. Army Caretaker; and Jim Wilson, Director of Hampton Parks and Recreation.

Robert Brauchle of the Daily Press and Jesica Turner, Executive Assistant of the FMA also attended the tour.

Before the tour departed, Kirsten Talken-Spaulling introduced Eola Dance, a native of Hampton, who is the Chief of Visitor Services and Cultural Management for the Fort Monroe National Monument.

Agenda

1. 13-0219 Windshield Tour of Fort Monroe - U.S. Army, State and National Park Service Properties - and Discussion of Master Plan and National Park Service Plan along with Tour of Fort Monroe Community Activity Center.

The bus departed at 9:47 a.m. Mr. Oder stated that the property known as Fort Monroe has four owners: the U.S. Army, the NPS, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Coast Guard (who owns the light house). There are two tenants: the Chamberlin Hotel, which has a lease until December of 2087, and the City of Hampton.

As the tour passed what is now known as the Paradise Ocean Club, Mr. Oder explained that it was formerly the Officer's Club. The Army found a tenant and the lease was acceptable to the NPS which enabled them to keep the building, pool and beaches open and of use to the public.

The tour proceeded to the far northern areas of Fort Monroe. Ms. Talken-Spaulding explained that the northern area of the property belongs to the Army. The area is known as Dog Beach and it will transition from the Department of Defense to the Department of the Interior and NPS after the environmental cleanup is complete. Mr. Pasquino stated that some of the Army land is open but beyond the fence is off-limits and will eventually transition.

In response to Vice Mayor Wallace's question about the anticipated time frame for the transition, Mr. Pasquino responded that it was supposed to take place on February 15, 2012, but he has stopped guessing as to when the actual transition will occur. Ms. Talken-Spaulding shared that the process involves the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Restoration Advisory Board. Both entities participate and the process is transparent.

Three maps were provided on the tour (copies attached). One shows the current conditions and the others show future conditions with the green hatched area showing the NPS easement but Commonwealth ownership.

In response to Councilman Stuart's question about the eventual vision for the northern area, Ms. Talken-Spaulding said that long-term planning is taking place which involves the City of Hampton, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and United States residents. It is a national process. The plan is for this to be a living landscape and evokes what Captain John Smith saw historically. The question asked is, "Why are we a National Park and how do we articulate that?"

Mr. Oder pointed out the recreational vehicle park which is under a sublet of the lease to the Paradise Ocean Club and indicated a couple runs it. There is a small shelter available for lease and in the future they hope to have more shelters and more use by groups.

As the tour went by the Batteries, Mr. Oder indicated there was no plan for them at this time but possible ideas include wine cellars, storage, and a restaurant or restrooms.

Mr. Oder also shared that a YMCA Day Camp will be starting on Fort Monroe soon.

Ms. Talken-Spaulding directed Council's attention to the ball field on the right which is in the boundaries while the ballpark on the left is out of the boundaries.

Councilman Stuart asked if the airstrip is viable. Ms. Talken-Spaulding said that there are no plans for the Walker Airfield at this time and the questions to be asked when considering reuses are:

1. Is it in the mission?
2. Does it provide safety?
3. Does it help the NPS maintain what they are about (i.e. does aviation match the mission)?

Ms. Talken-Spauldning continued that it is currently used by the Hampton Police Division for training and will also be used as a gathering spot for the YMCA Day Camp. It has been used as a heliport at times by the Governor of Virginia and also for emergencies. Mr. Oder stated that it has also been used for fire department training and for Nightingale landing. He also stated that three economic development opportunities had come forward and all wanted use of the airstrip which would require the involvement of the Federal Aviation Authority. A question that arises is, is that what we're trying to create in the sense of a neighborhood.

Mr. Oder pointed out on the left was the first school which was integrated and stated that the FMA had received several inquiries about the building for classroom type uses. He also stated that the Butler buildings had many viable, marketable uses and the shelter area was an old Navy lookout site.

The tour proceeded to Outlook Beach where Mr. Wilson stated that the City has lifeguards. He shared that this beach has no parking problems and is open from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. seven days each week. Ms. Talken-Spauldning stated that this is an example of collaborative work because the regulations here parallel those in place at Buckroe Beach. This is also an area with good volunteer coordination with the Clean City Commission and lots of volunteers for beach cleanup. Mr. Oder said they are planning stairs to make access better and they are working with the Fort Monroe Foundation with respect to possible naming rights. The batteries have plumbing so they could possibly contain restrooms later.

In response to Councilman Stuart's question about staffing of the lighthouse, Mr. Oder stated it was not staffed but is maintained at least once per month. Ms. Talken-Spauldning shared that the lighthouse is the oldest structure on the property. It was constructed in 1802 and lit in 1803. It is the longest-serving navigational aid on the Chesapeake Bay.

Mr. Wilson pointed out that the Engineer's Wharf is the only legal place to fish at Fort Monroe and is open from sunrise to sunset seven days each week. The other fishing pier is of interest for possible future use.

Mr. Oder stated that extra-duty Hampton Police Division officers are patrolling areas of Fort Monroe now. He also shared that Continental Park continues to host summer concerts on Thursdays from 7:00 until 8:15 p.m. and feature military bands.

The tour proceeded past the buildings across from the Chamberlin. Mr. Oder stated that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and parking present issues so it could be possible that a parking garage is needed for them to be leased or they could possibly be converted to apartments. He stressed that historical tax credits are critical for future development.

In response to an inquiry from Councilman Stuart about the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Applied Mathematics) academy, Mr. Oder stated the model is in Durham, NC where 70% of the graduates go to college in North Carolina and 7 of 10 students stay and do business within the state. He said that a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed for the buildings inside the moat. He continued that there is no traffic within the moat and the concept has been endorsed by many colleges. The YMCA may want to do a fitness building and apartment users would desire a fitness building.

Councilman Stuart inquired about businesses to support future students who would largely be on foot or bicycle. Mr. Oder stated there could possibly be a bus or trolley to Phoebus or even a water link to Phoebus, Downtown Hampton and Hampton University which would provide incredible connectivity.

Ms. Talken-Spaulding indicated that the NPS has a bike share program which could encourage use of all of these areas.

Mr. Oder spoke about the Freedom Support Center which contains offices for Veteran's services agencies downstairs.

The tour proceeded to the area inside of the moat.

Mr. Oder stated there are 176 houses and 160 of those can be leased without significant improvements; 133 are rented now. Others require an investment. The one common denominator is that many people like old houses. He also stated that he envisions Phoebus as the Main Street of Fort Monroe.

In response to Councilman Stuart's question about the need for a hotel on Fort Monroe or in Phoebus, Mr. Oder stated there is an opportunity for a hotel in the Wherry Quarter.

Mr. Oder stated that the moat has a granite bottom and is not transitioning. The environmental cleanup continues. He also stated that the reports of the architects on the buildings proposed for the STEAM academy are good. He stated that when the houses within the moat are leased, it is tough to move in since the size of vehicles which can enter the area inside the moat is limited. The entire top area of the moat can be walked.

Councilman Stuart inquired about the branding of Fort Monroe. Mr. Oder replied that the slogan, "Where Freedom Lives" is going well and the iconic logo creates a theme where people can live, work, play and learn. He stated that there is a full day of activities when people visit.

The Tour left the bus and walked the moat area near Quarters 1 and continued walking the area inside of the moat past the Casemate Museum. The group returned to the bus at 11:10 a.m. and Ms. Talken-Spaulding shared information on the Junior Ranger program. She shared that while the Fort was quiet a year ago, it now has a rejuvenated feeling.

Councilman Stuart inquired about the stories about various hauntings involving Fort Monroe and was told they do receive many paranormal investigation requests. Mr. Reyes shared information from his time on the post and stated that there is a book containing ghost stories of Fort Monroe which is available in the Casemate Museum.

The tour drove along Mill Creek where the kayak launch was pointed out. A handicapped-accessible kayak launch will be added. Ms. Talken-Spaulding stated that Fort Monroe is an anchor of the Captain John Smith Water Trail. Mr. Oder added there will be a 7 mile trail along the waterfront and it will be a living waterfront.

The tour arrived at the community center at 11:17 and the group received a tour and information from Jim Wilson, Lavon Marrow, Karen Harden, Taylor McDonald and also from Angie Miller and Michelle Patchett of the YMCA. The zero access pool was viewed and the group learned it will be used to work with both the YMCA and the Veterans' Administration. As the tour entered the gym, the group received information on the classes which are offered. The YMCA Day Camp will have 180 kids each session and their activities will include kayaking, outdoor nature areas, drama, art and pottery. The other areas of the community center which were toured were the craft room, computer room, game room and multi-purpose room.

At 11:40 a.m. the tour departed to return to the Bay Breeze.

In response to Vice Mayor Wallace's question about large concerts, Ms. Talken-Spaulding shared that the Paradise Ocean Club will be doing Toby Keith and some other large groups so that facility is meeting that need.

Mr. Oder suggested the question to be asked is, "What do we (the Fort Monroe Authority) want to be when we grow up?" He stated they are open to ideas but the FMA can't do it alone. To be successful, the ideas must make sense, be economically viable, and be good for the community.

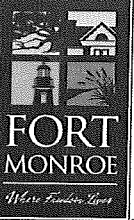
Adjournment

The tour concluded at the Bay Breeze at 11:50 a.m. and the meeting was adjourned.

Molly Joseph Ward
Mayor

Katherine K. Glass, CMC
Clerk of Council

Date approved by Council _____

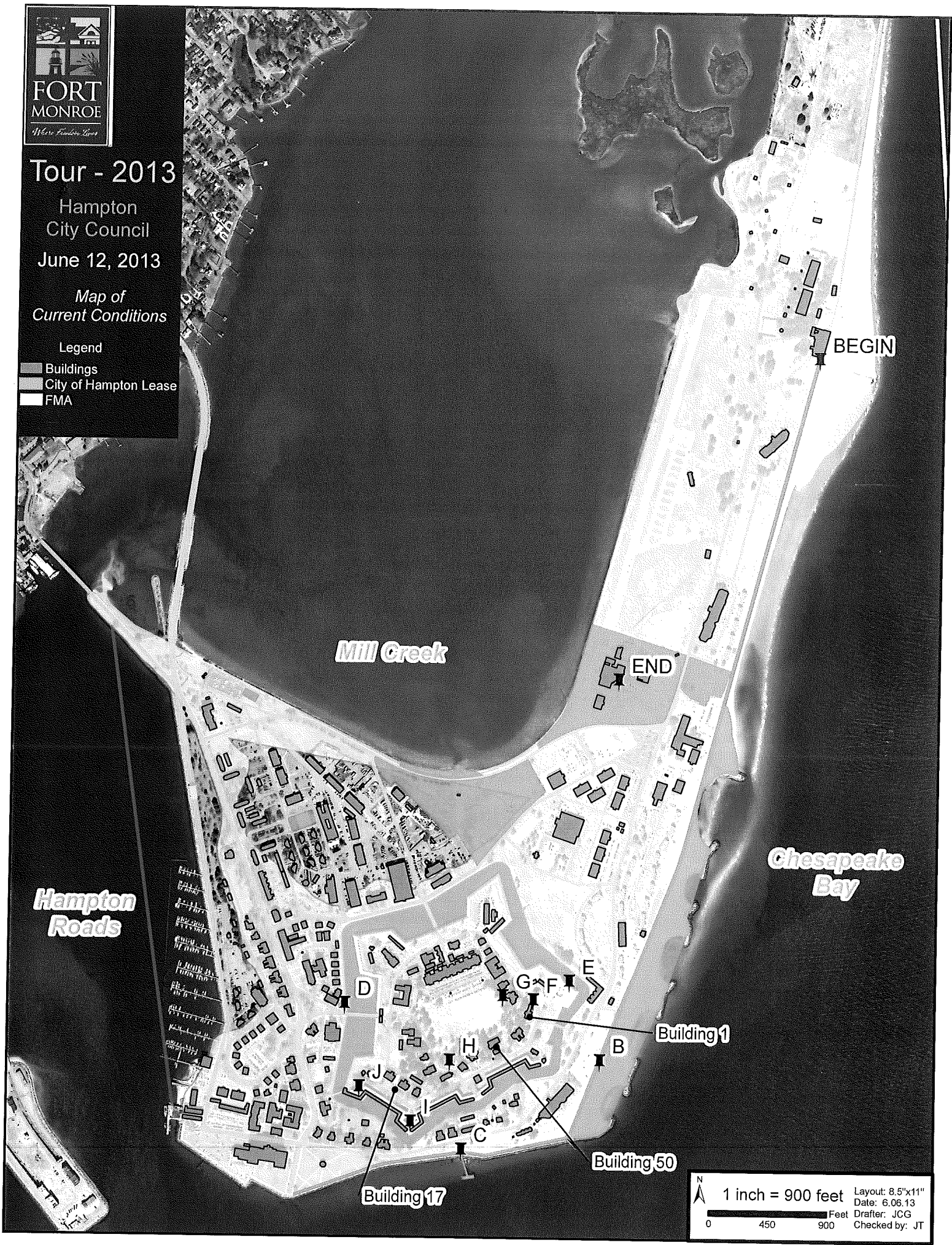


Tour - 2013

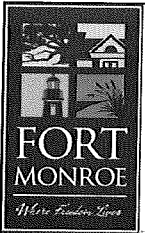
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Map of
Current Conditions

- Legend
- Buildings
 - City of Hampton Lease
 - FMA



N
1 inch = 900 feet
0 450 900 Feet
Layout: 8.5"x11"
Date: 6.06.13
Drafter: JCG
Checked by: JT



Tour - 2013

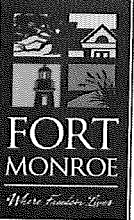
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Map of
Future Conditions

- Legend
- NPS
 - Easement
 - FMA



N
1 inch = 400 feet
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Date: 6.06.13
Drafter: JCG
Checked by: JT



Tour - 2013

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Map of
Future Conditions

- Legend
- NPS
 - Easement
 - FMA



1 inch = 1,250 feet
Date: 6.06.13
Drafter: JCG
Checked by: JT